



Durley C of E Primary School Newsletter

Spring Term 1 – 12th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you and your families had a lovely Christmas break and managed to relax during the festivities. Wishing you all a very happy New Year and all the very best for 2026.

Staffing

Our HLTA, Kate Goddard has been on maternity for a year and after speaking to her during the autumn term, she has confirmed that she will not be returning to Durley. She would like to be able to focus on her daughter, Jasmine. Miss Goddard worked at our school for just over 5 years and was well-loved by both children and staff alike. I am sure you will join me in wishing her all the very best for her future.

Mrs Cook, our school librarian is also away from school at present in order to be with her sister in the USA. Our thoughts are with Mrs Cook and her family at this time.

Curriculum Update

We have had a busy start to the new term and the classrooms have been buzzing with the exciting learning children are undertaking. Blue and Yellow Classes have been busy with their new dragon theme and have started to read stories based around this.

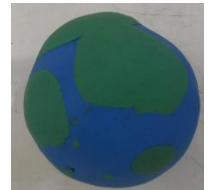


Blue Class went on a dinosaur hunt early last week and many children were excited to tell me how many dinosaurs they had spotted around the school.

Red and Green Classes have started their learning based around volcanoes and this included making the different parts of the Earth out of plasticine to illustrate this. They used the Chrome books to complete some research and did a brilliant job. In addition to this, the children have been learning about skeletons and had great fun making their own last week!



In Purple Class, the children had an active couple of days on Thursday and Friday taking part in Bikeability. Despite the rain, the children participated enthusiastically and the Bikeability staff commented on how well-mannered the children were. Really well done Purple Class!



Amazing Children

Many of you will remember that I wrote in my last newsletter about one of our Year 5 pupils, who had his lovely locks cut off and donated these to the Princess Trust. I am delighted to let you know that at the time of writing this newsletter, he has raised a whopping £1000 for this charity. Well done! This is a fantastic achievement.

If you would like to donate to this worthy cause, I have put the link to his 'Just Giving' page below

https://www.justgiving.com/page/chris-acton-11?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=EMJustGiving

Parents Evening

We are fast approaching our next Parent's Evening and we have decided to bring this date forward to the week before half term. Parent's Evenings will be on **Tuesday 10th February 3-6pm and Wednesday 11th February 4-7pm.**

At the last Parent's Evening, we decided to change the format and I formulated a Google questionnaire in order to help with evaluating this. We had 28 responses and these represented a sample across all five classes.

It is clear from reading all the evaluations that there was a mix of opinion, with a majority of parents who submitted questionnaires, positive about the new format but with a small number

How satisfied were you with your overall experience of Parent's Evening?

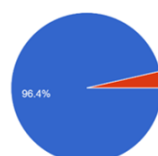
Very satisfied/satisfied	89% - 25/28 parents
Dissatisfied	10.7% - 3/28 parents

of parents who did not like the new arrangement. We also discussed and reviewed

What did you like about your experience of Parent's Evening?

You told us.....	
• Good to hear how my daughter was doing • It was smoothly run • Lovely to have the Head greeting us at the door, I liked having everyone together in the hall • Timings were kept to better • Lovely to see work displayed on the wall, as well as books • The setting felt comfortable and there was plenty of space between teacher's desks	• The teachers clearly know the children and care very much about them • Nice to have Mrs Grist greeting us at the door • Very efficient, not squashed in corridors • Not squashed in the corridor together • I like that no-one congregated in hall ways • Really efficient

Was the evening well organised?



● Yes
● No

Yes	96% - 27/28 parents
No	4% - 1/28 parents

How could the evening be improved for next time?

You told us.....	
• I found the noise a little distracting • Slightly more notice next time • It might be helpful for parents to request private appointments if needed • I don't think the hall works • Tea and biscuits! • I found the noise distracting • I prefer the Parent's Evening in classrooms • Have some data to see how my child is performing against national average	• Sensory issues – the presence of a young child running around made it difficult to focus • Confidentiality concerns – as a parent of an SEN child, it is important to have space for conversations that can't be overheard • It would be useful to open a classroom and a TA be available to look after younger children

Other comments and reflections:

You told us.....	
• You'll never please everyone, so do what works best! • Was lovely being greeted by Mrs Grist and being able to have a brief conversation about what she had observed about my child • It was hard to judge how much privacy we had	• The evening was well organised and ran well • It was a simple process that I liked • I did find the noise level high but if it works better for the teachers, then I think continue • Thank you to all the staff at Durley, your care and support is much appreciated

Parent's Evening as a staff group and have decided that we would like to remain with appointments taking place in the hall.

We recognise that some parents felt the noise level was tricky, so will ensure that there is a place for children to wait. However, we would encourage parents to try and make arrangements so that children do not attend. We appreciate this is hard from a childcare viewpoint, but unfortunately, I cannot ask a Teaching Assistant to supervise children as this is out of their contracted hours. I will endeavour to keep an eye on children but my priority has to be greeting you, as parents and carers and keeping the school site safe.

For parents of SEN children, Mrs Nikki Lawrence will be available on one of the evenings to meet with you, if you wish or if this is not convenient is more than happy to meet at a mutually agreed time.

Menu Changes- School Dinners – New Company

As you know, the company providing children's school dinners changed in January 2026. I am pleased to let you know that as a result, the cost of a school meal has reduced to £2.75. While this is great news for you, as parents, it will put significant financial pressure on schools around the maintenance of the kitchen equipment. Unfortunately the reduction has not been passed on to the school in any way.

Following the first full week, we have had mixed reviews from the children, however the majority appear happy with the changes. We are having a few difficulties with children changing their choice when they arrive to pick up their meal because they like the look of it. Unfortunately, this causes a big problem for the kitchen staff as they only cook what is ordered for the day. Please can we ask that you discuss the menu choices with your child and ensure they are happy with their daily choice and also remember that there is always the option to send a packed lunch in should your child not like any of the options.

[\\3040DC22\Staff\\$\apink\Downloads\PRI AW25 FOLDED MENU HAMPSHIRE 24.11.25.pdf](#)

Would you like to work at the school as a Lunchtime Supervisor?

This is a very important and rewarding role. If you, or someone you know would like to join our team of lunchtime supervisors please contact the school office for more information.

Mini Renovations

As outlined in my last newsletter, we are keen to facilitate some mini-renovations in our school. We have had lots of parents volunteer, which is lovely. We are hoping to arrange these during February half term and our first project will be the children's toilets. If you have already expressed an interest in helping, we will be in touch in the next couple of weeks.

Thank you ever so much for your support with this.

If you are unable to give your time, but are willing to purchase equipment for the work, I will be putting a wishlist together so do keep your eyes peeled!

Flood Defences

The work on the new wall to help boost our flood defences will start this week. We are hoping that this will take no longer than a week but please bear with us if this extends into next week.



Reminder – We are a Nut and Banana Free School



Can I remind you that we do not allow any children to bring nuts or bananas into school. This includes products that may contain nuts and banana, as we currently have a number of pupils with a severe allergic reactions..

Have a lovely rest of your week and I look forward to the rest of this term with you all.

Best wishes,

Caroline Grist
Headteacher

Calendar Dates for 2026

IN-SERVICE TRAINING DAYS (School Closures) for academic year 2025-2026

Wednesday 3 September 2025
Monday 3 November 2025
Friday 5 December 2025
Monday 1 June 2026
Wednesday 22 July 2026

Diary Dates for the 2025-2026 school year – all dates can be subject to change.
All changes and new dates in the diary will appear in red.

Spring Term 2026

Thursday 15 January	Deadline for Year R September 2026 applications
Friday 29 January	Years 3,4,5 Children's concert in Southampton
Friday 30 January	1:45 Christingle service in Holy Cross Church, Durley
Tuesday 10 February	Safer Internet Day
Tuesday 10 February	Yr 6 height & weight. Yr R height, weight & vision checks
Tuesday 10 February	3:00-5:00pm Parents evening (date change)
Wednesday 11 February	3:00-5:00pm Parents evening (date change)

HALF TERM 16-20 February

2-4 March 2026	Year 3 and 4 residential trip to Home Farm, Beaulieu
Thursday 5 March	World Book Day
Thursday 5 March	Family Reading Night – 5:30 to 6:30pm
9-13 March 2026	Year 5 and 6 residential visit to Little Canada, Isle of Wight
Thursday 12 March	Wyvern Cluster Vocal Festival
Friday 27 March	1:30pm Easter service in Holy Cross Church, Durley.
Friday 27 March	No after school childcare club

EASTER HOLIDAYS 30 March – 10 April

Monday 4 May	Bank Holiday
Monday 11 May	Year 6 SATs week
Monday 18 May	Whole School and class photos

HALF TERM 25-29 May

Monday 1 June	Inset day
Thursday 11 June	7:30-8:30pm New parents meeting – Year R Sept 26
Tuesday 16 June	9:30-10.30am First new Year R settling session
Wednesday 17 June	1:30pm Sports Day
Saturday 20 June	12:30-2:30pm Durley Church Fete at Wintershill Hall
Tuesday 23 June	9:30-10:30am Second new Year R settling session
Wednesday 24 June	2:15pm Summer music concert
Tuesday 30 June	Wyvern Transition Day
Tuesday 30 June	9:30-10:30am Final new Year R settling session
Friday 3 July	Year 6 Leavers service at Portsmouth Cathedral

Monday 6 July	KS2 Production dress rehearsal to whole school
Tuesday 7 July	6:00pm KS2 Production
Wednesday 8 July	1:30pm KS2 Production
Thursday 9 July	6:00pm KS2 Production
Tuesday 21 July	1:30 Leavers service at Durley Holy Cross Church
Tuesday 21 July	3:30pm School closes for pupils – No After school Childcare Club
Wednesday 22 July	Inset day